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ABSTRACT

Designed as a special studies unit for secondary school students or for adult volunteers, this student workbook and teacher's guide explains how to produce an accurate record of memorable neighborhood houses. The activities in the workbook include observation and information gathering. The workbook sections describe various steps in the process and a flow chart indicates the steps involved. The section on building selection indicates criteria to consider, methods of identifying the property owner, and means for securing permission and cooperation. The following section identifies the building and surrounding context with initial plans to follow, current information to document, and how to take a distant first view. The next section delineates the steps to take in measuring and describing the building. The site description section contains categories of objects and structures, how to conduct the inventory, a checklist and a map. A section on the purpose of a photographic record and how to prepare photographs precedes a section on gathering information from other sources. Following a section on how to use people as a source on information on historical buildings, a checklist identifies contributing factors to a building's significance. The final section contains the directions and a form to provide a lasting record of the building documentation. An outline in the teacher's guide provides details concerning the project's curriculum and administration along with tentative time requirements. A checklist describes the tasks involved in the project and the responsible individual or team. A section on "Selecting and Working with the Appropriate Community Repository" offers ideas on locating institutions to collect, care for, and make available historical materials. After a description promoting community participation, a list indicates the interdisciplinary skills and knowledge developed by the students. The next section discusses the benefits of the program to students, teachers, schools, community agencies, cultural associations, property owners, and senior citizen groups. A resource list identifies five organizations to contact for further information. (CK)

ED 377 102

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Inventory America:
Residential Buildings

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TO THE EDUCATIONAL RESOURCES INFORMATION CENTER (ERIC)"

Student Workbook

Pilot Edition

For Selected School Use Only

by Richard Haupt

Under the auspices of
The National Center for the Study of History

SO 024 356

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R.H.
R.W.P.

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The official *Inventory America* form follows page 37.

Introduction

Welcome to *Inventory America*! You are about to engage in a grass roots effort to collect vital information about our most overlooked historical places – the ones at home.

The preservation and continuing use of historic buildings sustains community pride. Well-maintained older buildings reinforce a sense of identity in neighborhoods, providing significance to places where people live, work, learn, develop and recreate. They also contribute to cultural vitality, property values, tourism and economic development.

Inventory America makes it possible for you to carry out historical research on buildings in your own community and then have your work preserved for others to use.

Operating much like a historical detective, you will gather the clues and track down the information needed to inventory older houses in your community. This workbook will guide all your steps, from general research to completion of the inventory of residential buildings itself.

Once the *Inventory America* form is completed, you will contribute copies to your local library or historical society. You will make copies available to state and national historical institutions. As a result, your work will be used by future students and researchers.

Remember – knowledge about our past is the first step in preserving it.

Good luck!

Inventory America Activities

Goals

Our history is not just in books. It is also found in memories, objects, places and in buildings. *Inventory America* enlists students, senior citizens and community associations in studying and producing an accurate record of memorable neighborhood houses.

Guided by your workbook, you will make observations and gather information on these buildings. You will focus on places where people live. This includes houses, apartments and other types of buildings that have been converted to residential use. Your goal is to select a building, describe it, research its history and comment on its significance. When you have put your research on the *Inventory America* form, it will become a resource for those who value history at local, state and national levels.

Steps To Reach Your Goals

Participation in the *Inventory America* project requires study, action and teamwork. Precision and imaginative research are essential throughout. Read the entire workbook at least once before beginning your work. You will find comments, instructions, space to note important data and checklists to mark.

Your first task will be to plan the way you will work with team members to complete the inventory. With your project leaders and others, you will locate and select a specific building.

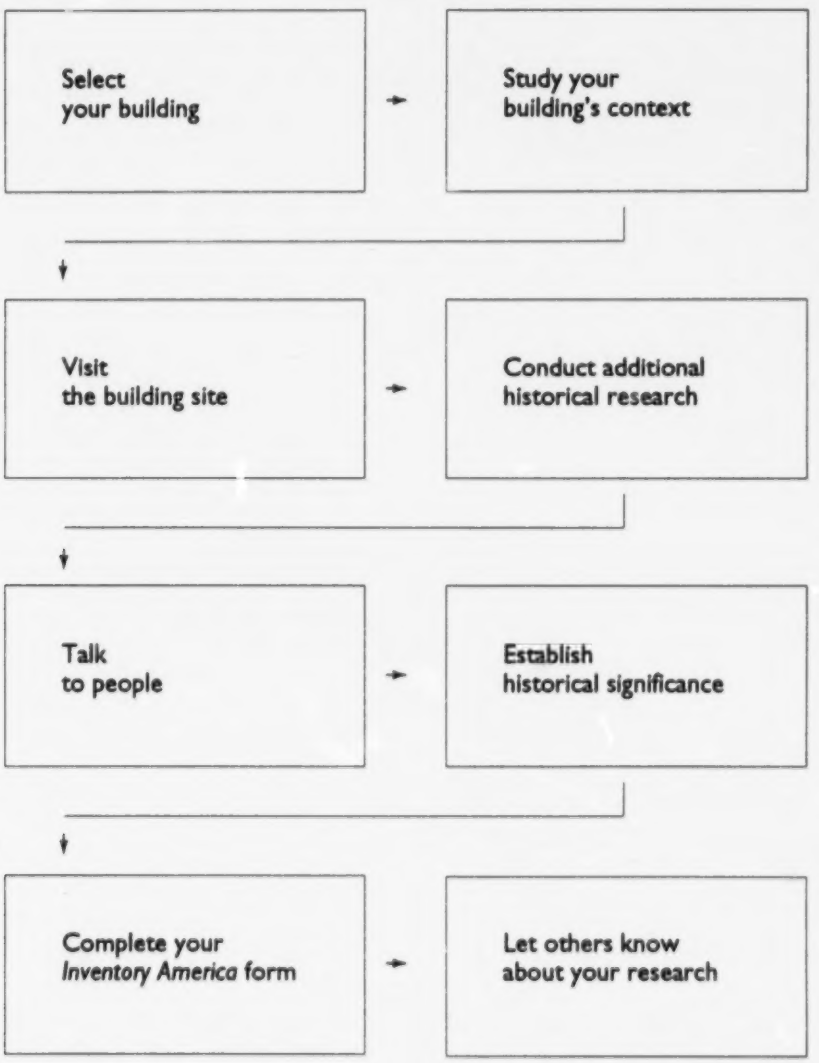
After selecting the building to be inventoried and receiving the owner's permission to do so, you will visit its site. Here you will observe and describe both the land around the building and the building itself. You will measure, map, inventory and photograph your site. As a final step, you will carry out additional historical research, then examine the building's historical significance. Since you are focusing on a residential building, you will want to pay particular attention to details about the activities and lives of individuals associated with it.

When you have gathered all of the information needed and noted it in the workbook, you will then transfer it to the permanent *Inventory America* form. Your form will carry your name and signature. The first copy and the attachments will be contributed to your community library or historical society. A duplicate of the form will be given to the building's owner, and other copies will be made to support state and national preservation efforts. As a result, your inventory will have a lasting impact.

Students may complete the necessary research, site visits and preparation of inventory forms in a period of two weeks. For others, there is no time limit.

Throughout the project, you will be challenged to think – about your community's history, the history of the building you have selected and, in particular, about the nature of historical significance.

The steps involved in completing the *Inventory America* project will flow in this order


Select your building
Study your building's context
Visit the building site
Conduct additional historical research
Talk to people
Establish historical significance
Complete your *Inventory America* form
Let others know about your research

7

Selecting Your Building

Selection Criteria

Many factors may play a part in deciding which buildings should be given priority for *Inventory America* research. Before any buildings are chosen, the criteria for selection should be defined.

Refer to a map of your community as you decide. You will also wish to consult published local guides, planning surveys and lists of historic buildings, such as the National Register of Historic Places. These are available at libraries, historical societies, your State Historical Preservation Office or the National Park Service.

Your project leader may also invite representatives of local historical or planning organizations to meet with your group. The purposes of *Inventory America* and the procedures you will follow to complete the *Inventory America* forms should be explained clearly at this time. These representatives should, if possible, be involved in setting the criteria for inventory buildings and in developing lists of potential buildings. This will give assurance that community agencies know about your work and that buildings which have already been researched won't be scheduled for inventory.

Having taken these preliminary steps, consider your selection criteria. These may include:

- *Buildings built before a certain date*
- *Buildings located in an established historic district or in a certain neighborhood*
- *Buildings of a certain architectural style*
- *Buildings constructed for similar purposes*
- *Buildings constructed by the same builder or architect*
- *Buildings already acknowledged to be important, but about which little is known*
- *Buildings suggested by the library or repository where completed inventory forms will be kept*
- *Buildings suggested by town or municipal officials, because of a current need for the research*
- *Buildings in danger of demolition, which deserve to be recorded before they are lost*
- *Buildings whose owners have volunteered to cooperate with the* Inventory America *effort*
- *Buildings whose owners are known to those who will be conducting the research*

When the selection criteria have been resolved and lists of potential buildings have been made, inventory assignments can begin. It is preferable to form teams to undertake the inventory. Three members are recommended for each team. Team members should be selected to represent a variety of talent and skills. These include communication (oral and written), historical, mathematical and practical, hands-on abilities.

Teams (or individuals) now can begin to choose the actual buildings to be inventoried from the lists that have been developed. The entire group can discuss whether selection criteria have been met and agree on final candidates.

When the list of potential buildings has been agreed upon, it is time to secure the cooperation of the owners.

Identifying the Property Owner(s)

Most owners will be an important source of information about their property. One goal of *Inventory America* is to tap into owner pride and knowledge to help the research succeed. Therefore, after selecting each building to be inventoried, secure permission from its owner.

One simple way to learn the name of the property owner is to visit the property, identify yourself, tell about *Inventory America* and ask who the owner is. However, the most accurate approach is by way of the public record. The local Assessor's Office maintains tax rolls for your community. These rolls not only tell who the owner is, but will also have an up-to-date mailing address.

Time-Savers

- Have the exact address of your property. You may have to study tax parcel maps or plat maps in the Recorder's Office to identify correctly the property in question.
- If several properties are going to be inventoried, get information about their owners at the same time.

Securing Permissions and Cooperation

Once you have the name and current address of the building owner(s), a formal letter of permission should be sent. Recommended wording appears below. If no answer is received within one week of your mailing, a phone call should be made to the individual. Be sure to send the letter on school or organization stationery. Include a copy of this letter and a stamped self-addressed envelope.

(Date)

Dear _____(owner's name),

In cooperation with the _____(community agency), a team of students or members from _____(name of school or organization) seeks your permission to research the house that you own at _____(address). As you may know, this building is considered by the _____(historical agency) as an important heritage resource for _____(community name).

Our research is being guided by a workbook of instructions called *Inventory America*. When the team assigned to your property has completed its research, a copy of it will be sent to you and another copy will be put on file at _____(repository) for the future use of others.

This may be the first time that work done by students and/or volunteers will be put into a more lasting form to serve as part of the larger inventory of our heritage resources.

Specifically, we will need to visit your property (exterior only) on a day approved in advance by you. While there, we will engage in the following activities:

- We will study the exterior of the building with respect to its exterior dimensions, the materials of its construction, its roof style and its general appearance.
- We will conduct an inventory of the other buildings or exterior features on the property.
- We will photograph or sketch the exterior of the building.

As our work progresses, we will welcome any information and help that you can give us concerning the building and its history.

If you will give your permission, please initial the attached copy of this letter and return it to us by _____(date). We will contact you and schedule an appropriate day for our site visit.

Thank you for your participation.

Sincerely,

(include names of project leader and team members)

Your Building and its Context

Initial Plans

When you have received the owners' permissions, work on the inventories themselves may begin. You will need:

- A final list of buildings to be inventoried
- Team (or individual) assignments for each building to be inventoried

If the team method is chosen, each team should have a clear understanding of the role of individual members. Since one inventory form will be completed for each building, team members may wish to divide tasks. In this way, several participants could focus on a single process (such as measuring, describing the property or photographing). If small groups are involved, it may be preferable to have team members individually answer all questions in their own copies of the workbook, then meet to coordinate the completion of the final form.

Current Information

Current information can now be compiled for each building. Certain details may require further research and can be postponed until after the site visit. Take note of missing information. Be sure to complete all responses in your workbook before beginning the final inventory form.

[See *Inventory America* form, page 1]

Building address

City *County* *State* *ZIP Code*

Present owner's name

Present owner's address (if different from building address)

Present occupant's name (if different from owner's)

Size of the property (square feet or acres)

Date and time of site visit

Reason(s) this building was selected for inventory

Take A Distant View First

The historian is ultimately a collector of the true stories about the past. All stories are placed in a setting. Understanding a community's development will help you to appreciate the setting in which your building's story took place.

Resist the temptation to visit your building's site too soon. Your research should begin with a distant view; then, increasingly, you can add the close-up details. Before turning to the specific building you are going to inventory, first consider its place in the community.

You will first have to think about the building's location in relation to the way your community grew. To answer this question, think about the spread of your community since its earliest settlement. Generally, a pattern emerges:

- Most towns and cities have grown somewhat like the rings of a tree.
- The oldest area of community development and the oldest building are frequently at the center.
- As growth takes place, newer areas are built further from the center, just beyond those areas that had already been developed.
- However, unlike a tree's growth, town and city growth does not proceed in perfectly sequenced circles. It always progresses faster in some directions than in others. Therefore, buildings equidistant from the center of a community will not necessarily have been built at the same time.

Consulting the general works on local history you have assembled, consider the use to which your community's land has been put. There are various possibilities, including agricultural, commercial, industrial, recreational and residential. What may spur one form of growth, say industrial, in one direction may discourage residential growth in the same direction. As a result, communities do grow outwardly, but, unevenly. If you were to make a map of your community showing every area colored according to its general use, it would be easy to see the patterns of development that have evolved.

Another important influence in these patterns has to do with establishing zoning. Communities have learned that harmony and property values are easier to maintain if certain areas are reserved, in advance, for the kinds of development that will be permitted to take place there. For example, an oil refinery would not be allowed to be built in an area reserved for residential housing. Zoning, therefore, may be a major reason buildings are located in your community where they are.

Of course, the growth of any community, over time, depends on many factors. These include population growth, the availability of money for investment and the cycles of economic expansion and contraction. All communities began as small towns. Many towns grew, but some did not; ghost towns can be found in every state. Besides surface details, most smaller towns look much like they used to. In these towns, the pattern of development is no mystery. It is easy to see what happened, and with a little imagination you also can see what didn't happen.

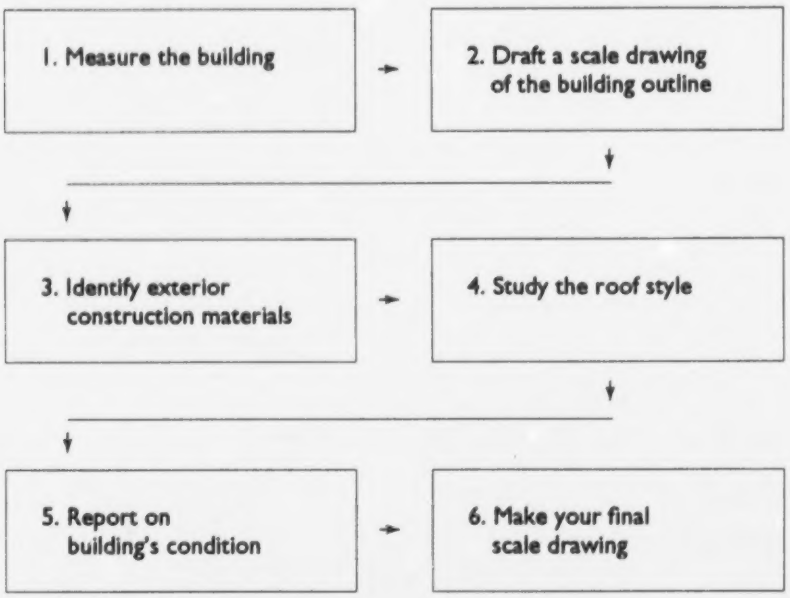
General factors that encourage *residential* development include:

- Geographic setting
- Public transportation
- Quality of roads
- Access to employment
- Access to schools
- Access to parks, playgrounds and other amenities
- Neighborhood cohesiveness
- Access to shopping
- Safety

Once you have thought about these patterns, it will be easier to decide if the building you have selected is typical or unusual with respect to its location. As you measure, map and photograph your building and its land, do not forget that you are studying a place which has a past as well as a present. During the entire time on-site, you should try to see in two time dimensions – the present and the past. While you work to objectively describe building and site elements "as they are," you must try to look through them to see things "as they were."

Describing Your Building

The first focus of your site visit will be the residential building itself. The flow chart shown below represents the steps to be taken:


1. Measure the building
2. Draft a scale drawing of the building outline
3. Identify exterior construction materials
4. Study the roof style
5. Report on building's condition
6. Make your final scale drawing

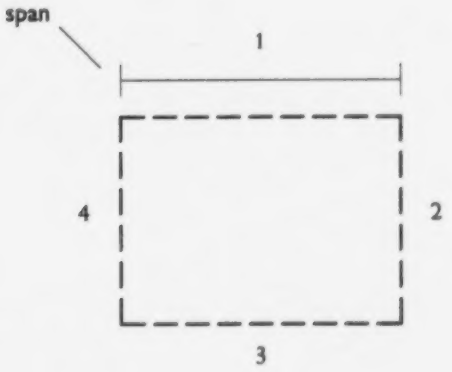
You will note that the architectural style is not assessed in *Inventory America*. The photographs you will submit with your inventory form will make it possible for stylistic judgments to be made by others.

Materials needed

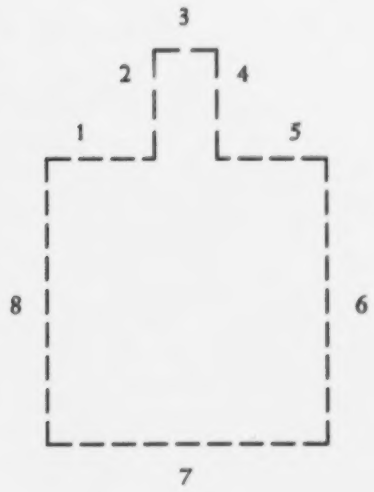
- Tape measure (50-foot length, if possible)
- Ball of string
- Magnetic compass
- Magnet (for testing for iron or steel)
- Scissors
- Paper and pencil
- Photocopies of the building outline grid [See *Inventory America* form, page 2]
- Your *Inventory America* workbook

Preparing to Measure Your Building

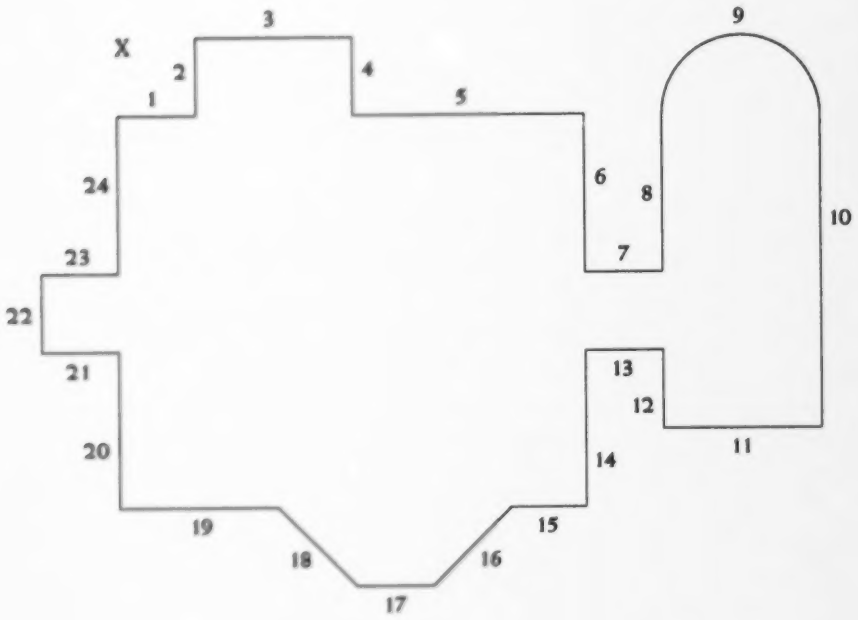
Your first task is to measure your building at its base so that you will be able to draw an accurate footprint of it. If it is a simple rectangular building, there will be four spans to measure:



If your building is a rectangle with an outside chimney, you will have to measure eight spans.



The following plan illustrates a building with twenty-four spans that must be measured. When making your final drawing, use solid lines to show the outline of the building.



Codes X . . . . . starting point for measurements

Numbers . . . spans where measurements are made

——— . . . . extent of the house structure

On-site Measuring

You are not expected or required to enter any building. All measurements should be made from the outside. Your ability to observe, estimate and evaluate will be very important.

1. Select one corner of your building as a starting point. Walk around the building, counting every span that must be measured.

2. Beginning at the same starting point, make a rough sketch of the building that includes all of the span you have just counted. Use a copy of the building outline grid appearing on the *Inventory America* form, page 2 for your work.

3. Return to your starting point. This time carefully measure each span with your tape. Record each measurement at the appropriate place on your rough sketch. This will be placed on a clean copy of the building outline grid provided. Accuracy is essential: These measurements and your sketch will be the basis for a scale drawing of the building's outline to be prepared later. You do not want to have to return to the site to make corrections.

   In situations where shrubs, ground drop-offs or other features prevent you from moving along the building's base, you may use a ball of string. Hold one end of the string at the beginning of each span, then pay out the exact amount of string required to reach the end of the span. Keeping the line taut, cut the string. Then measure the string segment with your measuring instrument at some more accessible space, keeping the same amount of tension on the string as you had while producing the original segments.

4. Using your magnetic compass, determine the position of true north in relation to your building sketch. Note the direction of true north on your building outline grid.

5. Count the number of stories in the building, indicating if there is an attic. Take note of these observations on the building outline grid.

Identifying Dominant Exterior Building Materials

Practically every solid material known to man has been used at some time as part of a building. Fortunately, you don't have to know the differences between redwood and southern white pine, or Vermont granite and Georgia marble. But you probably can recognize the major categories of materials that have been used in the building you are studying. A survey of the materials used in a building can help to establish the quality, the uniqueness, the craftsmanship and the preservation potential of that structure.

Method

- **Be sure you or your team members can identify each kind of material appearing in the table which follows.**
- **The table is designed to guide your survey of four main areas of the structure:**

  Foundations
  Walls
  Porches or other attachments
  Roofs

- **In each category, mark the visible building materials. The material that is dominant – that is, the one that is used most frequently – should be checked in the first bubble.**

  Example

  Say the outer walls of your building are made of brick and decorated with some ornamental ceramic tile. On your form, you would mark:

Dominant material	Other material(s)	
☒	☐	*Brick*
☐	☐	*Cement block*
☐	☒	*Ceramic tile*
☐	☐	*Concrete or mortar*

Building Materials
[See *Inventory America* form, page 3]

Foundation Materials

Dominant material	Other material(s)	
☐	☐	*Brick*
☐	☐	*Cement block*
☐	☐	*Cinder block*
☐	☐	*Concrete or mortar*
☐	☐	*Iron or steel*
☐	☐	*Stone*
☐	☐	*Wood*
☐	☐	*Other (specify)*

Wall Materials

Dominant material	Other material(s)	
☐	☐	*Brick*
☐	☐	*Cement block*
☐	☐	*Ceramic tile, terra cotta or other ceramic material*
☐	☐	*Cinder block*
☐	☐	*Composition shingles or siding*
☐	☐	*Concrete or stucco*
☐	☐	*Glass block*
☐	☐	*Iron or steel*
☐	☐	*Metal siding*
☐	☐	*Plastic siding*
☐	☐	*Stone*
☐	☐	*Wood boards or plywood*
☐	☐	*Wood shingles*
☐	☐	*Wood timbers*
☐	☐	*Other (specify)*

Porch or Deck materials

Dominant material	Other material(s)	
☐	☐	*Brick*
☐	☐	*Cement block*
☐	☐	*Ceramic tile, terra cotta or other ceramic material*
☐	☐	*Cinder block*
☐	☐	*Composition shingles or siding*
☐	☐	*Concrete or stucco*
☐	☐	*Glass block*
☐	☐	*Iron or steel*
☐	☐	*Metal siding*
☐	☐	*Plastic siding*
☐	☐	*Stone*
☐	☐	*Wood boards or plywood*
☐	☐	*Wood shingles*
☐	☐	*Wood timbers*
☐	☐	*Other (specify)*

Roof Materials (visual estimates only)

Dominant material	Other material(s)	
☐	☐	*Composition shingles*
☐	☐	*Gravel*
☐	☐	*Metal*
☐	☐	*Rolled roofing*
☐	☐	*Slate*
☐	☐	*Tar*
☐	☐	*Tile*
☐	☐	*Wood shingles or shakes*
☐	☐	*Other (specify)*
☐	☐	*Not visible*

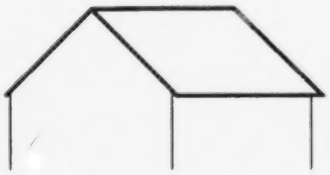
Identifying the Roof Style

The shape or type of roof helps to carry out the architectural style of the building. It may also be useful in helping to date the period in which the structure was built. Complex roofs may tell us about the skill of the craftsmen and the quality of the building itself.

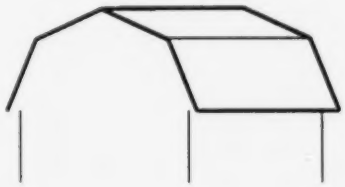
Study the form below and check the roof shape which most closely matches the building under study. If there is more than one shape represented, make more than one check mark.

[See *Inventory America* form, page 4]

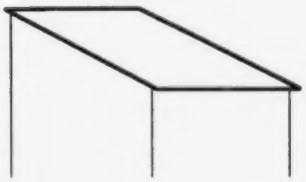
☐ *Gable*



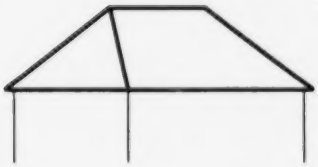
☐ *Gambrel*



☐ *Shed*



☐ *Hip*



☐ *Mansard*

☐ *Peak*

☐ *Flat*

Condition Report

There are five main threats to all buildings:

1. Weather and water
2. Trees, plants and fungi
3. Insects and vermin
4. Human abuse
5. Natural disaster (fires, earthquakes, floods, etc.)

Nevertheless, most buildings are tough. If it receives even minimal maintenance to keep its basic structure intact, a building can last for hundreds of years. Think how long barns last with only surface upkeep. However, if there are broken-out windows, missing roof sections or crumbling and washed-out foundations, decay can be rapid.

The form below will guide your examination of the building. Remember, this is not a beauty contest. You should mark the elements on the form below with respect to structural soundness only.

Place a check mark in the column that best fits the condition of each of the building elements below:

[See *Inventory America* form, page 5]

Sound & intact	Some deterioration	Major visible decay, missing elements or damage	
☐	☐	☐	*Foundation*
☐	☐	☐	*Foundation line (sill)*
☐	☐	☐	*Walls*
☐	☐	☐	*Siding*
☐	☐	☐	*Supporting columns*
☐	☐	☐	*Steps*
☐	☐	☐	*Porches*
☐	☐	☐	*Doors & windows*
☐	☐	☐	*Chimneys*
☐	☐	☐	*Gutters & drains*
☐	☐	☐	*Roof*

Describing the Site

Objects and Structures

The building being inventoried may be surrounded by other, possibly smaller, buildings and structures.

These may be classified in nine categories:

- Access facilities
- Aesthetic elements
- Communication objects
- Historical elements
- Recreation structures
- Safety and security elements
- Shelter and storage structures
- Supports
- Utilities and channels
- Working places

To help you identify these objects and structures, a series of checklists appear below. They should be used in several ways:

1. As a glossary – Learn the definitions of all of the terms. You should be able to recognize a "benchmark," "stile" or any of the other elements when you see them.

2. As a visual guide – Use the checklist that follows as you visit the site. It will help you "see" all of the elements that may be present.

3. As the basis for your inventory.

Conducting the Inventory

You and your team members have already described the building. Now it is time to use the checklist appearing below to identify other manmade elements on the property. Make sure that you clearly understand where the boundary lines fall. Don't inventory elements which are on public right-of-ways or on other people's land.

Plan a route that will enable you to systematically make a visual inspection of the whole property. Move slowly and deliberately. When you encounter an object or structure on the list, place a check mark in the box to the left of the list. In case of repeated elements, make a tally (𝍸) to the right of the list.

When you have completed the checklist of structures surrounding your building, turn to the section in the workbook titled "Establishing Historical Significance." Note all statements preceded with a circle rather than a square. While you are walking around the property, check off all of them that you can see are true. Review these observations later when you are completing your research on the building.

Checklist of Buildings and Structures Most Likely to Surround Building Being Inventoried
[See Inventory America form, page 6]

Access facilities

- ☐ *Boardwalks*
- ☐ *Bridges*
- ☐ *Chair lifts*
- ☐ *Docks and wharves*
- ☐ *Driveways*
- ☐ *Entryway structures (gateposts, etc.)*
- ☐ *Gates*
- ☐ *Helipads*
- ☐ *Parking areas*
- ☐ *Ramps*
- ☐ *Steps (sets of)*
- ☐ *Stiles*
- ☐ *Trestles*
- ☐ *Tunnels*
- ☐ *Walkways (permanent)*

Aesthetic elements

- ☐ *Arbors*
- ☐ *Art (outdoor)*
- ☐ *Bell towers*
- ☐ *Birdbaths*
- ☐ *Fish ponds*
- ☐ *Fountains*
- ☐ *Murals*
- ☐ *Sculpture and statuary*

Communication objects (free-standing)

- ☐ *Aerials*
- ☐ *Antennas*
- ☐ *Bells*
- ☐ *Benchmarks*
- ☐ *Billboards*
- ☐ *Clocks*
- ☐ *Inscriptions*
- ☐ *Mailboxes*
- ☐ *Mile posts*
- ☐ *Satellite dishes*
- ☐ *Sundials*
- ☐ *Telephone booths*

Historical elements
(see owner/occupant for help in this category)

- ☐ *Abandoned structures*
- ☐ *Cemeteries*
- ☐ *Earthworks*
- ☐ *Fortifications*
- ☐ *Foundations*
- ☐ *Gravestones*
- ☐ *Mausoleums*
- ☐ *Monuments*
- ☐ *Ruins*
- ☐ *Shrines and totems*

Recreation structures

- ☐ *Amphitheaters*
- ☐ *Ballfields*
- ☐ *Bandstands*
- ☐ *Benches (permanent)*
- ☐ *Fireplaces*
- ☐ *Lawn bowling*
- ☐ *Miniature golf*
- ☐ *Observation decks*
- ☐ *Patios*
- ☐ *Play areas*
- ☐ *Putting greens*
- ☐ *Riding rings*
- ☐ *Saunas*
- ☐ *Shooting ranges*
- ☐ *Stages*
- ☐ *Swimming pools*
- ☐ *Tennis courts*
- ☐ *Wading pools (permanent)*

Safety and security elements

- ☐ *Alarms*
- ☐ *Beacons*
- ☐ *Call boxes*
- ☐ *Fences*
- ☐ *Fire plugs*
- ☐ *Fire towers*
- ☐ *Foghorns*
- ☐ *Grates*
- ☐ *Guard rails*
- ☐ *Lighthouses*
- ☐ *Lights*
- ☐ *Signals*
- ☐ *Sirens*
- ☐ *Walls (stone, masonry, brick, etc.)*

Shelter and storage structures

- ☐ *Barns*
- ☐ *Bathhouses*
- ☐ *Beach houses*
- ☐ *Beehives*
- ☐ *Birdhouses (free-standing)*
- ☐ *Boat houses*
- ☐ *Cabins*
- ☐ *Carports*
- ☐ *Carriage houses*
- ☐ *Chapels*
- ☐ *Coops*
- ☐ *Cribs*
- ☐ *Cyclone cellars*
- ☐ *Doghouses and kennels*
- ☐ *Food lockers*
- ☐ *Garages*
- ☐ *Gate houses*
- ☐ *Gazebos*
- ☐ *Greenhouses*
- ☐ *Guardhouses*
- ☐ *Guest houses*
- ☐ *Hangers*
- ☐ *Icehouses*
- ☐ *Lavatories*
- ☐ *Mobile homes*
- ☐ *Observatories*
- ☐ *Pens*
- ☐ *Privies*
- ☐ *Roadside stands*
- ☐ *Root cellars*
- ☐ *Sheds*
- ☐ *Silos*
- ☐ *Smokehouses*
- ☐ *Springhouses*
- ☐ *Stables*
- ☐ *Tanks and cisterns*
- ☐ *Wine cellars*

Supports

- ☐ *Dams and dikes*
- ☐ *Flagpoles*
- ☐ *Hitching posts*
- ☐ *Piers*
- ☐ *Trellises*

Working places

- ☐ *Forges*
- ☐ *Kilns*
- ☐ *Mines*
- ☐ *Offices*
- ☐ *Power houses*
- ☐ *Quarry buildings*
- ☐ *Sawmills*
- ☐ *Water mills*
- ☐ *Windmills*

Utilities and channels

- ☐ *Aqueducts*
- ☐ *Drains and sewers*
- ☐ *Generators*
- ☐ *Incinerators*
- ☐ *Manholes*
- ☐ *Power lines*
- ☐ *Spillways*
- ☐ *Wells*

The Plat Map

The official plat map copy shows the full extent of the property and its boundaries. It may also show other important general information including principal buildings, roadways, utilities and easements. If possible, enclose a copy of the plat map with other *Inventory America* materials.

a) Learn where the property descriptions and plat maps are kept as public records. Recorders' and Tax Assessors' Offices are the most likely repositories.

b) Coordinate your visit with other *Inventory America* teams and with the public record repository. Be considerate – if many plat maps are being requested, make a phone call and schedule a time for your visit.

c) Visit the public record repository.

- Secure a copy of the plat map of the property being surveyed
- Secure a copy of the written description of the property (this will be on the deed)

d) Study the map of the property.

- Note all elements on the map; make sure they are clear to you
- When in doubt about meaning, use a dictionary or real estate glossary for definitions of words or phrases
- Note the scale of the map

e) Write down on a sheet of paper details on the legal records you research. Include such details as:

- *Institution (courthouse, registry of deeds, etc.)*
- *Street, number, city and ZIP code*
- *Representation of your building(s) in existing surveys*

Making a Photographic Record

Purpose

Good photographs are essential. They make it possible for anyone to study the building without seeing it in person. By following the guidelines in this workbook, your photographs will include all of the principal historical and architectural elements of the building and its site.

Preparing to Photograph the Site

Finding a long-lasting way to preserve photographs is difficult. Ideally, photos should be black and white, printed on acid-free paper, and enclosed in a glassine, acid-free envelope. If this is not possible, other options are discussed below.

If you can visit your site only once, use a Polaroid camera. When you leave, you will be certain to have the necessary pictures.

In normal circumstances, 35mm cameras are probably your best bet. They are reliable, easy to use and commonly available. The film is not expensive and making duplicate photos is always an option.

Sometimes a 35mm camera is equipped with a perspective correction lens. This will help minimize distortions. When wide views must be photographed, consider an inexpensive, disposable wide-angle lens camera containing at least a dozen exposures. Frequently you can photograph the view you need simply by turning your own camera horizontally or vertically.

Color film is, in one way, a convenient option. It can help detect differences in materials and traces of deterioration. Color is also best for exhibits, slide talks and other activities that can tell others about *Inventory America*. Unfortunately, color photos tend to fade. Because of this, archivists prefer black and white film. Whether you use color or black and white, be sure to check film exposure settings so that colors or gray tones will be accurate.

What To Photograph (If Possible)

While on-site, take at least one photograph of the views listed below. Follow the sequence used in this list. The numbers shown are important: they will be used as the keys to your photo's subjects.

1. The complete building front, including the roof
2. The building's front and right side, from a corner angle
3. The building's front and left side, from a corner angle
4. The rear of the building, including the roof
5. The shape and style of the roof, from the ground
6. A close-up of a typical part of the foundation
7. A close-up of a typical part of the exterior walls
8. A close-up of the main doorway
9. A close-up of a typical window and its frame

10a, 10b, 10c, 10d, 10e, etc..
Photograph each porch, deck, breezeway or other attachment to the building. (Add more numbers to this series if needed.)

11. Overview photographs of the immediate area around the building:
    11a. View from the building's north side
    11b. View from the building's east side
    11c. View from the building's south side
    11d. View from the building's west side

12a, 12b, 12c, 12d, 12e, etc..
Other important structures and man-made elements on the property. (Add more numbers to this series if needed.)

Recording Your Photos

Lightly print in pencil (not ink) on the rear of each photograph the number which corresponds to the required view listed above. (Inks tend to smear or bleed through photographic paper.) For views which are partly obscured by foliage or other obstructions, describe what the camera could not record on a separate sheet of paper. Key the descriptions to the identification number of the picture.

Place all of your pictures and information about them in a zip-lock bag.

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Going Back in Time

You have now surveyed your building and its site. You know about its location, its forms, its materials and its condition. Now you will be challenged to learn more about its history from other information sources:

- Published materials
- Unpublished materials
- Pictorial materials

Refer to the statements in the section titled "Establishing Historical Significance." Use them as a guide for your research.

As you do your general research, you should be seeking specific answers to the following:

Historical Information

[See *Inventory America* form, page 1]

Date of original construction

Original owner's name

Historic and/or common names of the building

Name of the family primarily associated with the building

Name(s) of the architect(s) and/or builder(s), if known.

The most notable activity on the site, if known

The most notable happening on the site (tornado, flood, battle, etc.), if known

The most notable resident(s) of, or visitor(s) to, the building, if known.

Published Materials

Anything that has been printed on paper falls under this heading. School, college and community libraries are your most obvious starting points. Do not get discouraged if you are not able to locate published material. Relatively few published works focus on residential buildings. Consult local and regional publications first.

Checklist of Published Materials That May be Helpful

Books

Almanacs
Annals (events in yearly sequence)
Atlases
Autobiographies
Bibliographies
Biographies
Blue books (society listings)
Business directories
Catalogs
City directories
Encyclopedias
Field guides (nature)
Genealogies
Geographies
Guide books (travel)
Histories
Local statutes and ordinances
Memoirs
Picture books
Telephone directories
Travel and tourism guides
Traveler's accounts
Yearbooks (school and community)

Maps

City
Contour
County
Economic development
General reference
Geologic
Political divisions
Relief
Transportation
Zoning

Miscellaneous published materials

Articles
Brochures
Bulletins
Census data
City/town plans
Commemorative publications
Indexes
Inventories
Journals
Magazines
Newsletters (organization and business)
Newspapers
Periodicals
Post cards
Real estate listings
Surveys
Zoning publications

Unpublished Materials (Manuscripts)

All handwritten or typed words and symbols appearing on paper are considered unpublished materials, or manuscripts. These materials tend to be linked to the lives of individuals or the activities of businesses or organizations.

When using them, remember the following:

- These are one-of-a-kind materials. They often mean a great deal to their owners – respect them.
- Whenever possible, direct specific questions to the owners of documents. They can search their own papers and letters to provide you with answers.
- If you are permitted to research in unpublished materials, be prepared for slow going. You can spend hours going through unsorted and unindexed materials which may be difficult to read.
- Going back in time takes time.

There may be research libraries and historical collections of unpublished materials which will be useful to you. However, most unpublished materials on local buildings and sites will be found in public records offices at various government levels. Other records are most likely in the possession of property owners and others who have personal links to the place being studied.

Unpublished Materials Most Frequently Used in Research on Community People and Places

Business and organization records

Accounting records
Annual reports
By-laws
Cash receipts
Contracts
Correspondence
Employee records
Insurance records
Internal memos
Memberships
Minutes
Program and product development materials
Sales reports
Stocks and asset records

Government records

Building permits and inspection reports
City plans
Census records
Court records
Deeds
Demolition and building permits
Highway and road records
Licenses
Minutes of committees and legislative bodies
Public records
Tax records
Vital statistics (marriages, births, deaths)
Voter registrations
Zoning testimony and decisions

Personal and family records

Adoption and birth certificates
Commendations and honors
Correspondence
Creative writings
Diaries
Educational and school records
Family lore
Financial records
Genealogies
Household inventories
Immigration and citizenship papers
Insurance policies and payments
Inventions and patents
Medical records
Memberships
Memoirs
Military records
Public service materials
Wills and bequests

Real estate records

Abstracts of titles
Agricultural surveys
Appraisals
Architectural plans
Building code materials
Building descriptions
Building permits
Deeds
Easements
Geologic surveys
Insurance policies
Lease papers
Mortgage records
Pest control records
Plat maps
Property tax assessments
Soil tests
Surveys of land
Surveys of rights of way
Utility records
Water tests and surveys
Zoning records

Pictorial Materials

Photographs are windows to the past. They can give a kind of certainty which no other source can match.

Although the listing below includes many kinds of graphic materials, your main resource will be photographs. In researching places at the local level, it is unusual to find them represented in pictures other than photographs. Look for pictures which show the building and its site at other times. Date pictures as accurately as possible, then arrange them in a time sequence.

For every picture in a library or a public collection, there are thousands in family albums and slide collections. When seeking pictures of local buildings and sites, begin with building owners and others whose lives have been linked to the place being studied.

Local professional and amateur photographers should also be contacted. If they don't have collections, they should know about others who do.

Existing Pictorial Materials

As your research continues, look for older, existing pictures. Family photographs, pictures in newspapers and other publications and even postcard views may be available for your inventory building. When you find older pictures simply use a photocopy machine to reproduce them. If possible, use high-quality paper that is acid-free.

- Experiment with the tone setting to assure the image's clarity.
- Print or type on the photocopy the following information:

  Subject of picture
  Estimated date of picture
  Source of picture (name of family member, newspaper, etc.)

Pictoral Materials Which Will be Useful in Research on Community

People and Places

Camera Images

- *Motion pictures: Include 8mm, 16mm, 32mm, color or black and white, produced by professionals or amateurs.*
- *Photographs: Include early photographic techniques like ambrotypes, calotypes, daguerreotypes and others as well as: aerial photographs, Polaroids, color photographs, glass and film negatives, 3-D, photocopy images, filmstrips, microfilm, microforms, stereopticon views and others.*
- *Photographic reproductions: Include all photographic techniques which have been employed to transfer pictorial materials from a single image to printed formats for broader circulation. Examples include: book illustrations, postcards, posters, magazines, billboards, stickers, decals, labels, etc.*
- *Videotapes*
- *X-rays*

Computer Images

- *These images are stored on discs, tapes and other formats requiring appropriate monitors to be seen.*

Man-Made Images

- *Drawings: Include pencil, pen-and-ink, charcoal, pastels, crayon and other materials.*
- *Paintings: Include watercolors, oils, acrylics, murals, frescoes and other color techniques.*
- *Picture writings: Include hieroglyphics, pictographs and other uses of symbols and pictures as communication.*
- *Prints and engravings: Include a large category of techniques for the creation and production of multiple images. The use of these images in historical research does not require an understanding of the different techniques. However, in art museums and other repositories these images are frequently cataloged according to the tech nique used. Examples: woodcuts, block prints, lithographs, chromolithographs, silk screen prints, steel and copper engravings, aquatints, mezzotints, etchings, dry point engravings, stipple engravings, line engravings and others.*
- *Silhouettes: These may include paintings or scissor cutouts.*
- *Stencils: Generally used in design and decorative applications.*

Using People as a Source

In seeking information, think of yourself as a reporter. List the people who may have information on your building or who can give you leads to others who do. Call or write them for interviews. Keep a careful record of the date and time of your meetings, and when you meet, don't be shy or hesitant. Most people will be as helpful as possible to a considerate person who is on an interesting and useful quest.

You will soon learn what every news reporter knows – people love to reminisce.

Use tact and skill to keep the responses from straying too far from the main information that you seek. The more you know about your subject before you ask your first question, the better you can recognize useful information when you hear it. When you meet people who possess much information, ask if you can talk to them later when other questions have arisen.

Be sure to prepare your questions before your meetings. Use the statements from the section "Establishing Historical Significance" as a guide to questions you may want to ask. Remember to write down the complete, correctly spelled names and occupations of all people who helped you. This does several things. It lets them know that they will receive credit for the help they give, and it also shows how thorough you have been.

Institutions and Organizations That Can Help

As a logical starting point, call on local organizations with activities related to your building. The lists below can guide you to some of these sources.

Some of these organizations are in the business of answering questions and helping in research, but most are not. Therefore, limit your questions and make them as specific as possible. You are asking people to give you their time and attention. Respect both.

Look in the phone book, particularly the yellow pages, local directories and newspapers for specific names, addresses and telephone numbers. Before visiting people in these organizations, prepare your questions in advance.

Checklist of Institutions and Organizations Most Likely to Possess Information on Local and Regional Cultural Resources

Municipal & County Government Sources

Building Departments
(codes, inspections, permits)
Conservation Departments
(water quality, wildlife management, etc.)
Cooperative Extension Services
(U.S. Department of Agriculture)
Court Records
(court, appeals, circuit, claims, probate, etc.)
Economic development offices
Park and recreation departments
Planning departments
Recorder's offices
Street and highway departments
Utility offices
Zoning boards
Other offices responsible for property tax assessments, vital statistics, etc.

Local Nonprofit Institutional Sources

Archaeological societies
Archives
Botanical gardens
Cemeteries and memorial parks
Chambers of commerce
Churches and synagogues
Community foundations
Garden clubs
Genealogical associations
Historic preservation groups
Historical societies
Hobby groups linked to history
Libraries:
College & university
High school (public & private)
Public
Special
Museums
Neighborhood associations
Patriotic organizations
Public radio and television stations
Service clubs
Tourist bureaus
Utility offices (electricity, telephone, water)
Veterans organizations

Business & Commercial Sources

Antique and auction businesses
Architectural firms
Engineering firms
Funeral directors
Insurance agencies
Interior design firms
Landscape architects
Landscape and horticultural businesses
Law firms
Photographic studios
Publishers:
Newspapers
Local magazines or journals
Newsletters
Radio and television stations
Real estate offices
Surveyors and mapmaking businesses
Title and abstract offices
Used book shops

Individuals Who Can Help

Besides building owners and neighbors, there are many others who can supply information about the building. The list appearing below will help you develop your particular contacts. It gives the occupations of people who may possess important or interesting information.

Checklist of Individuals Most Likely to Possess Information About Local Cultural Resources

Construction & maintenance sources

Builders
Building restoration craftsmen
Electricians
Grounds maintenance personnel
House painters
Interior designers
Nurserymen
Plumbers
Roofers
Security personnel

History & education sources

Antique dealers
Archaeologists
Archivists
Auctioneers
Educators
Folklorists
Genealogists
Geographers
Historians
Historical collectors
Librarians
Museum personnel
Preservationists

Public service sources

Assessors
Building inspectors
County agricultural agents
Elected officials
Firemen
Planners
Policemen
Postal workers
Tourism specialists
Zoning officials

Real estate-related sources

Appraisers
Architects
Bankers (mortgage lenders)
Engineers
Insurance agents
Landscape architects
Lawyers
Realtors
Surveyors
Utility workers

General information sources

Artists
Broadcast journalists
Clergymen
Editors
Filmmakers
Funeral directors
Journalists
Long-term residents
Naturalists
Photographers
Pilots
Publishers
Rangers/Guides
Writers

Conducting Oral Interviews

As you get further along in your research, you will probably meet or hear about people who may know about the building you are studying. They should be interviewed for background information needed to establish the historical significance of your building. This section will help you prepare for these interviews.

A Word of Caution

Speaking directly to people who have first-hand knowledge about past people, places and things can be an important part of much historical research. But, obviously, there are limits to human memory. A historian talking to a veteran of the Civil War in 1866 would get much more information than an historian who spoke to that veteran in 1926. And today, everything we learn about the Civil War must come entirely from visiting the places and studying the artifacts, the writings and the pictures which remain.

As any lawyer or judge knows, even eyewitnesses who saw the same event recently may all tell different stories about what they believe they saw.

Therefore in historical research, use care in relying on the memory of others. The guidelines which follow will help you get the best and most reliable information in an oral interview.

Interviewing Guidelines (general)

- Learn as much as possible about the building and its history from your site visit and your research before you conduct an in-depth interview.
- Know in advance what information you are seeking. The statements in your workbook relating to establishing historical significance can serve as a guide to what you still need to know.
- Find people with broad historical knowledge, especially owners, occupants or neighbors who possess first-hand familiarity with the building and the people associated with it.
- Write down the names and addresses of the people being interviewed and specific information about their occupations and their links to the building.
- Write down the date of the interview
- Tell the people you are interviewing about the project, your research and how *Inventory America* will be used in the future.
- Use pictures or information already gathered to help focus the interview.
- Be an interested listener and note-taker.

Interviewing Guidelines, continued

- Let the person being interviewed speak without unnecessary interruptions. You may well learn about things you would have otherwise overlooked.
- Keep the interview focused on the building and the people associated with it. When speaking about the past, people will often drift into unrelated topics that may be interesting but do not relate to your research.
- If information is given which you know is incorrect, resist the temptation to correct the person being interviewed. If you are seen as a critic, the interview will quickly run dry. Try instead to rephrase your question in such a way to prompt a more accurate response.
- When the interview is over, express your appreciation and let each person know that he or she will be listed as a contributing source for your research.
- If the person being interviewed has more information than you can readily absorb in your notes, ask if you can come again with a tape recorder.

Taping An Interview

All of the previous guidelines still apply, but if you are taping the interview, note the following suggestions:

- Arrange in advance to meet in the place most comfortable for the person being interviewed.
- Assume you will need one or two hours of time with minimum interruptions. Explain this to the person being interviewed
- Practice in advance. Try to have, or borrow, a good quality tape recorder.
- Bring a fellow team member with you.
- Be sure that the microphone is properly set and located before you begin. Don't hold the mike. Place it where it is near, but not the focus of, attention.
- Eliminate as much background noise as possible.
- Clearly mark the tape and check the recording levels by beginning the recording with the names of the people being interviewed, their address and the date.

Establishing Historical Significance

When we claim that a building or a place is historically significant, we are simply saying that it represents something from the past that is worth remembering. Obviously, the most significant buildings are those which are important for the nation, but there are thousands of buildings which are important to their communities and regions, too. Your research will help identify them.

Each of the statements below can be a contributing factor to a building's significance. Based on your observations, research and discussions, place a check mark in front of the statements which are true for your inventory building. If you are unsure, check the bubble marked "unsure."

[See *Inventory America* form, page 8]

Note

○ = **Verify statement during field trip**
☐ = **Verify statement as part of research**

Past Factors	True	Unsure	
Construction	☐	☐	*The date of the building's construction is known.*
	☐	☐	*The building is more than fifty years old.*
	☐	☐	*The building was constructed within fifty years of the establishment of the nearest town or city.*
	☐	☐	*The building was considered a landmark when it was built.*
	☐	☐	*The building was a good example of a particular architectural style.*
	○	○	*The building's design was tailored to its site.*
	○	○	*The building was more substantial than others constructed at the same time in its vicinity.*
	○	○	*There was some new or unusual technology used in the building's construction.*
	○	○	*The building was constructed primarily of local materials.*
	☐	☐	*Some of the building elements were handmade on-site.*
	☐	☐	*Skilled craftsmen were brought in from distant places to help build the structure.*
	☐	☐	*The original paint colors are known.*

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Past Factors continued	True	Unsure	
Owners and Others	☐	☐	*The names of the principal owners and users of this building are known.*
	☐	☐	*The building has been owned primarily by one family.*
	☐	☐	*Prehistoric people are linked to this place.*
	☐	☐	*The name of the architect or builder is known.*
	☐	☐	*The name of the landscape architect is known.*
	☐	☐	*A person well-known beyond the community lived here.*
	☐	☐	*Notable things were done elsewhere by persons who lived here.*
	☐	☐	*Notable persons have visited this place.*
	☐	☐	*This place has been owned by, or closely linked to, an organization.*
Activities and Happenings	☐	☐	*The building has always been a residence.*
	☐	☐	*The building has served a public purpose at some time.*
	☐	☐	*This building represents the accumulated force of ordinary activities repeated over a great time span.*
	☐	☐	*There were notable things done here.*
	☐	☐	*It is linked to an important historical "first."*
	☐	☐	*It is the site of a tragedy or a natural disaster.*
	☐	☐	*It is the site of a battle or some other episode relating to a larger historical event.*
	☐	☐	*Water, minerals, or other natural resources have been part of the history of this place.*
	○	○	*The building sits near an ancient trail, road, portage or crossing.*

Present Factors

Property Status	☐	☐	*The building is locally owned.*
	☐	☐	*The building's continuing use as a residence seems assured.*
	☐	☐	*It is owned by a public or a nonprofit organization.*
	☐	☐	*It is now open to the public.*
	☐	☐	*The building is considered an anchor for its neighborhood.*
	☐	☐	*The building is at risk of being destroyed.*
Property Assets	○	○	*The building is reasonably well-maintained.*
	○	○	*It is now protected against neglect or vandalism.*
	○	○	*The property boundaries are clearly marked.*
	○	○	*The building has an attractive setting or spacious grounds.*
	○	○	*The property has been landscaped.*
	○	○	*There are gardens (flower or vegetable) on the site.*
	○	○	*There are land features that make the site appealing. (Examples: hills, valleys, views, beaches.)*
	○	○	*There are geologic features that make the site appealing. (Examples: caves, stone outcrops, rock ledges, fossils.)*
	○	○	*The site is enhanced by water. (Examples: springs, streams, marshes, ocean.)*

Present Factors continued	True	Unsure	
Surviving Elements (Historical and Natural)	○	○	*The "lay of the land" – the configuration of the ground – is similar to surrounding land.*
	○	○	*Existing trees and shrubs are representative of the original foliage.*
	○	○	*There is evidence of prehistoric occupation or visitation. (Examples: Indian mounds, earthworks, surface artifacts.)*
	○	○	*There are foundations or ruins of earlier buildings.*
	○	○	*There are cemeteries, graves or crypts on-site.*
	○	○	*The building is a surviving element in a ghost town or from a vanished settlement.*
	○	○	*There are outbuildings and other elements on the grounds which can help in our understanding of the past.*
	□	□	*The original building plans exist.*
	○	○	*The original style and form of the building is visible.*
	○	○	*The original materials in the walls and facade are still intact.*
	○	○	*Original exterior trim and other character-defining details are still visible.*
	○	○	*There are original signs, inscriptions or insignia on the building.*
	○	○	*The building has a marked cornerstone.*
	○	○	*There are tunnels or passageways connected to the building.*
	○	○	*There are scars or other effects of time on the building that serve as reminders of specific or general historical events.*
	○	○	*The building is known to have outstanding interior elements, furnishings or collections that enhance the property.*
Public Awareness	□	□	*The building has a name known to the public.*
	□	□	*It is considered a landmark building.*
	□	□	*It has been written about in books on history or tourism.*
	□	□	*It has been pictured on a postcard.*
	□	□	*It has been written about or pictured in newspapers or other publications.*
	□	□	*It has been portrayed in paintings or prints.*
	□	□	*There has been a radio or television feature on the building.*
	□	□	*There are stories or legends about it.*
	□	□	*This building has received honors or awards.*
	□	□	*Visitors sometimes film or photograph it.*
	□	□	*This place has been widely visited by many in the community.*

Future Factors	True	Unsure	
Preservation Potential	☐	☐	*There are long-term plans to preserve and restore the building.*
	☐	☐	*Funds have been secured to preserve the building.*
	☐	☐	*Potential sources of financing to preserve the building are reasonably assured.*
	☐	☐	*The building has educational potential.*
	☐	☐	*The building has memorial or commemorative potential.*
	☐	☐	*The building has tourism potential.*
	☐	☐	*The site has recreation potential.*
	☐	☐	*The building has reasonable potential for other contemporary uses.*

Associations

Check all the specific subjects that have associations with the building, or the building's residents:

- ☐ *Agriculture*
- ☐ *Anthropology*
- ☐ *Archaeology*
- ☐ *Architecture*
- ☐ *Art*
- ☐ *Commerce*
- ☐ *Communications*
- ☐ *Community history*
- ☐ *Conservation*
- ☐ *Criminality*
- ☐ *Economics*
- ☐ *Education*
- ☐ *Engineering*
- ☐ *Ethnic history*
- ☐ *Exploration/settlement*
- ☐ *Folklore*
- ☐ *Genealogy*
- ☐ *Historic preservation*
- ☐ *Horticulture*
- ☐ *Industry*
- ☐ *Labor*
- ☐ *Landscape architecture*
- ☐ *Law*
- ☐ *Literature*
- ☐ *Manufacturing*
- ☐ *Media*
- ☐ *Medicine*
- ☐ *Military*
- ☐ *Mining*
- ☐ *Music*
- ☐ *Philanthropy*
- ☐ *Philosophy*
- ☐ *Planning*
- ☐ *Politics*
- ☐ *Psychology*
- ☐ *Publishing*
- ☐ *Religion*
- ☐ *Science*
- ☐ *Social service*
- ☐ *Theater*
- ☐ *Transportation*

Completing the Inventory America Form

Everything you have done up to now has been a preparation for the final step – completing the official *Inventory America* form.

This form, signed by you and your team members, will be a lasting record of your hard work. Copies of it will be used by researchers in your own community and at both state and national levels.

In time, your information will be entered into data bases of information on America's historic resources. Because of this, you must make every effort to be accurate and neat. Use your team members or others to double-check that the information placed in your workbook is accurately transferred to the *Inventory America* form.

- **Entries of text should be printed in black or blue ballpoint ink. This will assure that clear photocopies are made.**
- **Squares or circles on the checklists should be marked with a No. 2 pencil (medium lead). These lists are designed to be machine-readable.**

During your research you have been reminded to write down the names of those who have helped you. The last page of the *Inventory America* form provides space for you to list them.

There is also space to list the location and address of the public repositories (courthouse, city hall, etc.) where public records of your inventory buildings are kept.

Attachments to Inventory Form

Place photographs in zip-lock bag and all other attachments in an 8½ x 11" envelope. Label the envelope with the name of the building inventoried.

Check all items below that are attached:

- **Copy of plat map, if available.**
- **Photographs (or photocopies of photographs) of building and site.**
- **Taped oral interview(s) and/or typescript of oral interview(s).**

Inventory America: Residential Buildings

- Position photograph #1 (the complete building front) over the dotted rectangle.
- Photocopy the entire page for the final inventory form.

Photograph of Building Front

Building name

Address

City *County* *State* *ZIP Code*

Inventory completed by

Current Information

Building address

City *County* *State* *ZIP Code*

Present owner's name

Present owner's address (if different from building address)

Present occupant's name (if different from owner's)

Size of the property (square feet or acres)

Date and time of site visit

Reason(s) this building was selected for inventory

Historical Information

Date of original construction

Original owner's name

Historic and/or common names of the building

Name of the family primarily associated with the building

Name(s) of the architect(s) and/or builder(s), if known.

The most notable activity on the site, if known

The most notable happening on the site (tornado, flood, battle, etc.), if known

The most notable resident(s) of, or visitor(s) to, the building, if known.

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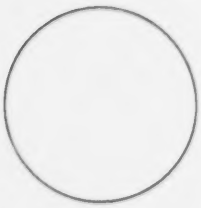
Inventory America
Building Outline Grid 1 square unit = 4 square feet



Direction of true north

Name of owner _____

Property address _____

_____

Number of stories _____

Attic *yes* *no* _____

Building Materials

Foundation Materials

Dominant material	Other material(s)	
☐	☐	*Brick*
☐	☐	*Cement block*
☐	☐	*Cinder block*
☐	☐	*Concrete or mortar*
☐	☐	*Iron or steel*
☐	☐	*Stone*
☐	☐	*Wood*
☐	☐	*Other (specify)*

Wall Materials

Dominant material	Other material(s)	
☐	☐	*Brick*
☐	☐	*Cement block*
☐	☐	*Ceramic tile, terra cotta or other ceramic material*
☐	☐	*Cinder block*
☐	☐	*Composition shingles or siding*
☐	☐	*Concrete or stucco*
☐	☐	*Glass block*
☐	☐	*Iron or steel*
☐	☐	*Metal siding*
☐	☐	*Plastic siding*
☐	☐	*Stone*
☐	☐	*Wood boards or plywood*
☐	☐	*Wood shingles*
☐	☐	*Wood timbers*
☐	☐	*Other (specify)*

Porch or Deck materials

Dominant material	Other material(s)	
☐	☐	*Brick*
☐	☐	*Cement block*
☐	☐	*Ceramic tile, terra cotta or other ceramic material*
☐	☐	*Cinder block*
☐	☐	*Composition shingles or siding*
☐	☐	*Concrete or stucco*
☐	☐	*Glass block*
☐	☐	*Iron or steel*
☐	☐	*Metal siding*
☐	☐	*Plastic siding*
☐	☐	*Stone*
☐	☐	*Wood boards or plywood*
☐	☐	*Wood shingles*
☐	☐	*Wood timbers*
☐	☐	*Other (specify)*

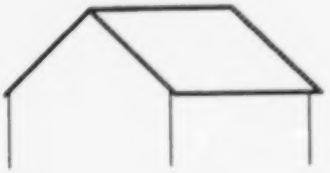
Roof Materials (visual estimates only)

Dominant material	Other material(s)	
☐	☐	*Composition shingles*
☐	☐	*Gravel*
☐	☐	*Metal*
☐	☐	*Rolled roofing*
☐	☐	*Slate*
☐	☐	*Tar*
☐	☐	*Tile*
☐	☐	*Wood shingles or shakes*
☐	☐	*Other (specify)*
☐	☐	*Not visible*

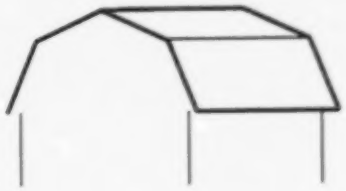
The Roof Style

Check off the appropriate roof styles.

☐ *Gable*

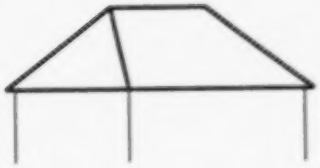


☐ *Gambrel*

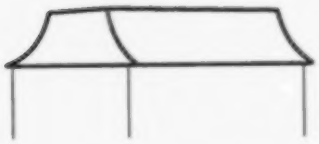


☐ *Shed*

☐ *Hip*



☐ *Mansard*



☐ *Peak*

☐ *Flat*

Condition Report

Sound & intact	Some deterioration	Major visible decay, missing elements or damage	
☐	☐	☐	*Foundation*
☐	☐	☐	*Foundation line (sill)*
☐	☐	☐	*Walls*
☐	☐	☐	*Siding*
☐	☐	☐	*Supporting columns*
☐	☐	☐	*Steps*
☐	☐	☐	*Porches*
☐	☐	☐	*Doors & windows*
☐	☐	☐	*Chimneys*
☐	☐	☐	*Gutters & drains*
☐	☐	☐	*Roof*

Buildings and Structures Most Likely to Surround Building Being Inventoried

Access facilities

- ☐ *Boardwalks*
- ☐ *Bridges*
- ☐ *Chair lifts*
- ☐ *Docks and wharves*
- ☐ *Driveways*
- ☐ *Entryway structures (gateposts, etc.)*
- ☐ *Gates*
- ☐ *Helipads*
- ☐ *Parking areas*
- ☐ *Ramps*
- ☐ *Steps (sets of)*
- ☐ *Stiles*
- ☐ *Trestles*
- ☐ *Tunnels*
- ☐ *Walkways (permanent)*

Aesthetic elements

- ☐ *Arbors*
- ☐ *Art (outdoor)*
- ☐ *Bell towers*
- ☐ *Birdbaths*
- ☐ *Fish ponds*
- ☐ *Fountains*
- ☐ *Murals*
- ☐ *Sculpture and statuary*

Communication objects (free-standing)

- ☐ *Aerials*
- ☐ *Antennas*
- ☐ *Bells*
- ☐ *Benchmarks*
- ☐ *Billboards*
- ☐ *Clocks*
- ☐ *Inscriptions*
- ☐ *Mailboxes*
- ☐ *Mile posts*
- ☐ *Satellite dishes*
- ☐ *Sundials*
- ☐ *Telephone booths*

Historical elements
(see owner/occupant for help in this category)

- ☐ *Abandoned structures*
- ☐ *Cemeteries*
- ☐ *Earthworks*
- ☐ *Fortifications*
- ☐ *Foundations*
- ☐ *Gravestones*
- ☐ *Mausoleums*
- ☐ *Monuments*
- ☐ *Ruins*
- ☐ *Shrines and totems*

Recreation Structures

- ☐ *Amphitheaters*
- ☐ *Ballfields*
- ☐ *Bandstands*
- ☐ *Benches (permanent)*
- ☐ *Fireplaces*
- ☐ *Lawn bowling*
- ☐ *Miniature golf*
- ☐ *Observation decks*
- ☐ *Patios*
- ☐ *Play areas*
- ☐ *Putting greens*
- ☐ *Riding rings*
- ☐ *Saunas*
- ☐ *Shooting ranges*
- ☐ *Stages*
- ☐ *Swimming pools*
- ☐ *Tennis courts*
- ☐ *Wading pools (permanent)*

Safety and Security Elements

- ☐ *Alarms*
- ☐ *Beacons*
- ☐ *Call boxes*
- ☐ *Fences*
- ☐ *Fire plugs*
- ☐ *Fire towers*
- ☐ *Fogborns*
- ☐ *Grates*
- ☐ *Guard rails*
- ☐ *Lighthouses*
- ☐ *Lights*
- ☐ *Signals*
- ☐ *Sirens*
- ☐ *Walls (stone, masonry, brick, etc.)*

Shelter and Storage Structures

- ☐ *Barns*
- ☐ *Bathhouses*
- ☐ *Beach houses*
- ☐ *Beehives*
- ☐ *Birdhouses (free-standing)*
- ☐ *Boat houses*
- ☐ *Cabins*
- ☐ *Carports*
- ☐ *Carriage houses*
- ☐ *Chapels*
- ☐ *Coops*
- ☐ *Cribs*
- ☐ *Cyclone cellars*
- ☐ *Doghouses and kennels*
- ☐ *Food lockers*
- ☐ *Garages*
- ☐ *Gate houses*
- ☐ *Gazebos*
- ☐ *Greenhouses*
- ☐ *Guardhouses*
- ☐ *Guest houses*
- ☐ *Hangers*
- ☐ *Icehouses*
- ☐ *Lavatories*
- ☐ *Mobile homes*
- ☐ *Observatories*
- ☐ *Pens*
- ☐ *Privies*
- ☐ *Roadside stands*
- ☐ *Root cellars*
- ☐ *Sheds*
- ☐ *Silos*
- ☐ *Smokehouses*
- ☐ *Springhouses*
- ☐ *Stables*
- ☐ *Tanks and cisterns*
- ☐ *Wine cellars*

Supports

- ☐ *Dams and dikes*
- ☐ *Flagpoles*
- ☐ *Hitching posts*
- ☐ *Piers*
- ☐ *Trellises*

Working places

- ☐ *Forges*
- ☐ *Kilns*
- ☐ *Mines*
- ☐ *Offices*
- ☐ *Power houses*
- ☐ *Quarry buildings*
- ☐ *Sawmills*
- ☐ *Water mills*
- ☐ *Windmills*

Utilities and channels

- ☐ *Aqueducts*
- ☐ *Drains and sewers*
- ☐ *Generators*
- ☐ *Incinerators*
- ☐ *Manholes*
- ☐ *Power lines*
- ☐ *Spillways*
- ☐ *Wells*

Establishing Historical Significance

Past Factors	True	Unsure	
Construction	☐	☐	*The date of the building's construction is known.*
	☐	☐	*The building is more than fifty years old.*
	☐	☐	*The building was constructed within fifty years of the establishment of the nearest town or city.*
	☐	☐	*The building was considered a landmark when it was built.*
	☐	☐	*The building was a good example of a particular architectural style.*
	○	○	*The building's design was tailored to its site.*
	○	○	*The building was more substantial than others constructed at the same time in its vicinity.*
	○	○	*There was some new or unusual technology used in the building's construction.*
	○	○	*The building was constructed primarily of local materials.*
	☐	☐	*Some of the building elements were handmade on-site.*
	☐	☐	*Skilled craftsmen were brought in from distant places to help build the structure.*
	☐	☐	*The original paint colors are known.*
Owners and Others	☐	☐	*The names of the principal owners and users of this building are known.*
	☐	☐	*The building has been owned primarily by one family.*
	☐	☐	*Prehistoric people are linked to this place.*
	☐	☐	*The name of the architect or builder is known.*
	☐	☐	*The name of the landscape architect is known.*
	☐	☐	*A person well-known beyond the community lived here.*
	☐	☐	*Notable things were done elsewhere by persons who lived here.*
	☐	☐	*Notable persons have visited this place.*
	☐	☐	*This place has been owned by, or closely linked to, an organization.*
Activities and Happenings	☐	☐	*The building has always been a residence.*
	☐	☐	*The building has served a public purpose at some time.*
	☐	☐	*This building represents the accumulated force of ordinary activities repeated over a great time span.*
	☐	☐	*There were notable things done here.*
	☐	☐	*It is linked to an important historical "first."*
	☐	☐	*It is the site of a tragedy or a natural disaster.*
	☐	☐	*It is the site of a battle or some other episode relating to a larger historical event.*
	☐	☐	*Water, minerals, or other natural resources have been part of the history of this place.*
	○	○	*The building sits near an ancient trail, road, portage or crossing*

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Present Factors	True	Unsure	
Property Status	☐	☐	*The building is locally owned.*
	☐	☐	*The building's continuing use as a residence seems assured.*
	☐	☐	*It is owned by a public or a nonprofit organization.*
	☐	☐	*It is now open to the public.*
	☐	☐	*The building is considered an anchor for its neighborhood.*
	☐	☐	*The building is at risk of being destroyed.*
Property Assets	○	○	*The building is reasonably well-maintained.*
	○	○	*It is now protected against neglect or vandalism.*
	○	○	*The property boundaries are clearly marked.*
	○	○	*The building has an attractive setting or spacious grounds.*
	○	○	*The property has been landscaped.*
	○	○	*There are gardens (flower or vegetable) on the site.*
	○	○	*There are land features that make the site appealing. (Examples: hills, valleys, views, beaches.)*
	○	○	*There are geologic features that make the site appealing. (Examples: caves, stone outcrops, rock ledges, fossils.)*
	○	○	*The site is enhanced by water. (Examples: springs, streams, marshes, ocean.)*
Surviving Elements (Historical and Natural)	○	○	*The "lay of the land" – the configuration of the ground – is similar to surrounding land.*
	○	○	*Existing trees and shrubs are representative of the original foliage.*
	○	○	*There is evidence of prehistoric occupation or visitation. (Examples: Indian mounds, earthworks, surface artifacts.)*
	○	○	*There are foundations or ruins of earlier buildings.*
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	○	○	*The building is a surviving element in a ghost town or from a vanished settlement.*
	○	○	*There are outbuildings and other elements on the grounds which can help in our understanding of the past.*
	☐	☐	*The original building plans exist.*
	○	○	*The original style and form of the building is visible.*
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	○	○	*Original exterior trim and other character-defining details are still visible.*
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	○	○	*The building has a marked cornerstone.*
	○	○	*There are tunnels or passageways connected to the building.*
	○	○	*There are scars or other effects of time on the building that serve as reminders of specific or general historical events.*
	○	○	*The building is known to have outstanding interior elements, furnishings or collections that enhance the property.*

Present Factors continued	True	Unsure	
Public Awareness	☐	☐	*The building has a name known to the public.*
	☐	☐	*It is considered a landmark building.*
	☐	☐	*It has been written about in books on history or tourism.*
	☐	☐	*It has been pictured on a postcard.*
	☐	☐	*It has been written about or pictured in newspapers or other publications.*
	☐	☐	*It has been portrayed in paintings or prints.*
	☐	☐	*There has been a radio or television feature on the building.*
	☐	☐	*There are stories or legends about it.*
	☐	☐	*This building has received honors or awards.*
	☐	☐	*Visitors sometimes film or photograph it.*
	☐	☐	*This place has been widely visited by many in the community.*

Future Factors	True	Unsure	
Preservation Potential	☐	☐	*There are long-term plans to preserve and restore the building.*
	☐	☐	*Funds have been secured to preserve the building.*
	☐	☐	*Potential sources of financing to preserve the building are reasonably assured.*
	☐	☐	*The building has educational potential.*
	☐	☐	*The building has memorial or commemorative potential.*
	☐	☐	*The building has tourism potential.*
	☐	☐	*The site has recreation potential.*
	☐	☐	*The building has reasonable potential for other contemporary uses.*

Associations

Check all the specific subjects that have associations with the building, or the building's residents:

☐ *Agriculture*	☐ *Exploration/Settlement*	☐ *Mining*
☐ *Anthropology*	☐ *Folklore*	☐ *Music*
☐ *Archaeology*	☐ *Genealogy*	☐ *Philanthropy*
☐ *Architecture*	☐ *Historic preservation*	☐ *Philosophy*
☐ *Art*	☐ *Horticulture*	☐ *Planning*
☐ *Commerce*	☐ *Industry*	☐ *Politics*
☐ *Communications*	☐ *Labor*	☐ *Psychology*
☐ *Community history*	☐ *Landscape architecture*	☐ *Publishing*
☐ *Conservation*	☐ *Law*	☐ *Religion*
☐ *Criminality*	☐ *Literature*	☐ *Science*
☐ *Economics*	☐ *Manufacturing*	☐ *Social service*
☐ *Education*	☐ *Media*	☐ *Theater*
☐ *Engineering*	☐ *Medicine*	☐ *Transportation*
☐ *Ethnic history*	☐ *Military*	

People and Institutions who Helped in the Research of this Inventory

Inventory Team

Name _____

Town or City _____

Signature _____ *Date* _____

Name _____

Town or City _____

Signature _____ *Date* _____

Name _____

Town or City _____

Signature _____ *Date* _____

Name _____

Town or City _____

Signature _____ *Date* _____

Name _____

Town or City _____

Signature _____ *Date* _____

Name _____

Town or City _____

Signature _____ *Date* _____

Name _____

Town or City _____

Signature _____ *Date* _____

Other People or Institutions who Helped in the Research of this Inventory

Name _____

Town or City _____

Signature _____ *Date* _____

Name _____

Town or City _____

Signature _____ *Date* _____

Name _____

Town or City _____

Signature _____ *Date* _____

Name _____

Town or City _____

Signature _____ *Date* _____

Name _____

Town or City _____

Signature _____ *Date* _____

Name _____

Town or City _____

Signature _____ *Date* _____

Name _____

Town or City _____

Signature _____ *Date* _____

The *Inventory America* Workbook was designed by Melilli.Mehl Graphic Designers and printed by XPress Copy in Portland, Maine.

Pages were composed by the designers on a Macintosh II using PageMaker 4.2.

The following typefaces are used systematically throughout the workbook to differentiate information:

General text is set in	Weiss Roman
Questions are set in	*Weiss Italic*
Instructions are set in	Gill Sans
Emphasized text is set in	*Gill Sans Italic*

Variations of these typefaces are also used for chapter titles, headings and page numbers.

★ ★

Inventory America:
Residential Buildings

Teacher & Project Supervisor Manual

Pilot Edition

For Selected School Use Only

by Richard Haupt

Under the auspices of
The National Center for the Study of History

Acknowledgements

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R.H.
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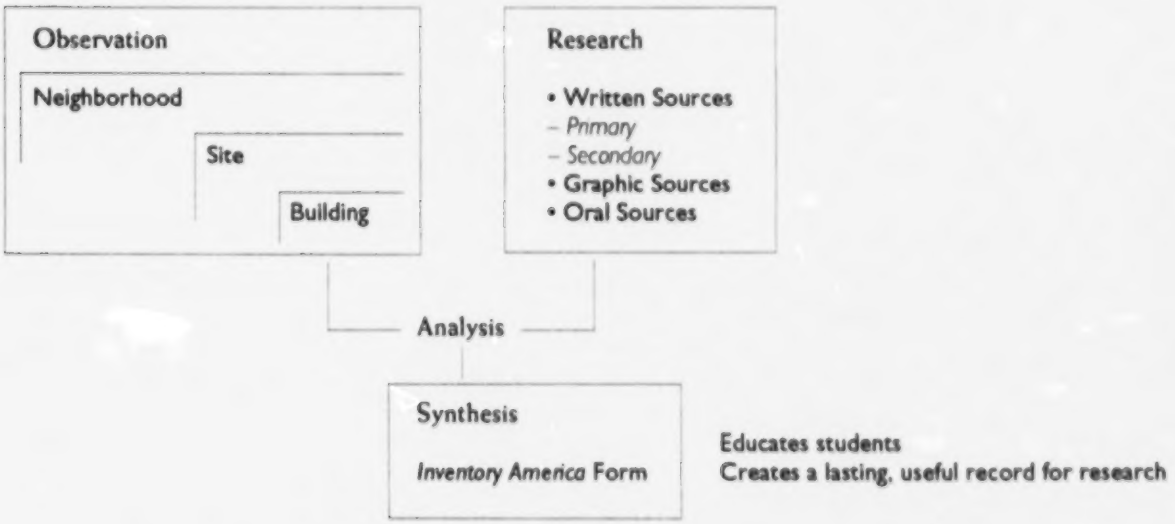
Welcome To Inventory America !

Millions of Americans who didn't enjoy history as students now enjoy history as an avocation. They prove that history you can get your hands on – personal history, family history, local history – is a powerful generators of interest and involvement. Unfortunately, there are very few educational materials available that generate the excitement that comes from collecting, organizing, researching and compiling close-to-home history.

Inventory America fills this void. It enlists students, senior citizens, and community associations in the ongoing efforts to inventory older neighborhood buildings. The *Inventory America* workbook makes the process explicit. Selecting a building, describing it, researching its history, and summarizing its significance are all explained as a step-by-step process. The results, compiled on the final *Inventory America* form, then become a resource for all those who seek to preserve our historic resources at local, state, and national levels.

Designed as a special studies unit for middle and high school students (or for adult volunteers,) the *Inventory America* project may be carried on as an adjunct to regular classes. During a suggested two-week time frame, each team of participants inventories and uncovers the history of an older residential building. Prior knowledge of historic preservation is not required to complete the inventory forms successfully.

In these activities, students learn local history while discovering how scholarship is applied to practical problems. They use and develop skills in observation, research, analysis, and synthesis. Inquisitiveness, interdisciplinary study, self-expression, and teamwork are all stressed. An *Inventory America* project can be a transforming experience for all participants. We welcome your participation!



Teaching Schedule

Inventory America's objectives and procedures are described in the student workbook. Details concerning the project's curriculum and administration are outlined here. In the suggested teaching schedule shown below, the tentative time requirements shown for each step may be revised to suit individual needs, particularly if you choose to add other interdisciplinary modules.

1. Select your building
"Introduction"
"Inventory America activities"
"Selecting your building"
Time recommended: 2 classes
(1st class occurs 4-8 weeks before preliminary research.)
2. Study your building's context
"Your building and its context"
Time recommended: 1 class
3. Visit the building site
"Describing your building"
"Describing the site"
"Making a photographic record"
Time recommended: 1 field trip
4. Conduct additional historical research
"Going back in time"
Time recommended: 1 class
5. Talk to people
"Using people as a source"
Time recommended: 1 class
(Students make independent interviews.)
6. Establish historical significance
"Establishing historical significance"
Time recommended: 2 classes
7. Complete your Inventory America form
"Completing the Inventory America Form"
Time recommended: 1 class
8. Let others know about your research
Time recommended: 1 field trip

The following checklist describes the tasks involved in your *Inventory America* project

Teacher/Project Leader Responsibility
Your role should consist primarily of instruction, community liaison, and oversight. "Instruction" in the form of classroom teaching is suggested below. Such instruction is used either to provide background for inventory activities or to assure understanding of information appearing in the student workbook.

Teacher/Project Leader Option
Note that a number of the activities listed are optional.

Student Team Responsibility
Team members are expected to participate in all aspects of *Inventory America* activities from initial planning to on-site study, research, and interviewing.

Adminsitrative Duties
Administrative and clerical needs are highlighted so they will not be overlooked. These duties consist largely of typing letters and lists, telephoning building owners, and confirming that student teams are on schedule. These duties may be assigned to students or to adult volunteers (from your local historical society, for example.)

Code for Responsibilities		
Teacher Responsibility	T	
Teacher Option	O	
Student Team Responsibility	S	
Administrative Duties	A	

Responsibility				✓	1. Select your building
T		S		☐	Select teams. [Suggestion: Schedule building selection well before students begin initial research. Allow approximately 4 to 8 weeks lead time to assure completion of the preliminary lists of buildings and to arrange for community cooperation with the project.]
T				☐	Contact cooperating local community organization. [For further information on this topic, see Teacher & Project Supervisor's Manual, "Selecting and Working with the Appropriate Community Repositories" and "Assuring Community Participation."]
T			A	☐	Develop list of potential inventory buildings. [Suggestion: Confirm that other surveys have not been made of the buildings you intend to inventory. For information, contact your local or regional historical society, public library, or State Historic Preservation Office.]
T		S	A	☐	Narrow and refine building list.
T			A	☐	Research owners' names and addresses and list them.
		S	A	☐	Prepare and mail letters requesting owners' permission.
			A	☐	Make follow-up phone calls to arrange dates for on-site visits.
					2. Study your building's context
T		S		☐	Match teams to the buildings to be inventoried.
		S		☐	Make phone calls to finalize dates & times for site visit.
	O			☐	Instruction: *History and Community Growth.*
	O			☐	Instruction: *Land Use and Zoning.*
	O			☐	Instruction: *Factors in Residential Growth.*

Responsibility				✔	3. Visit the building site
T				☐	Instruction: *Definition of Building Materials Terms.* (See Student Workbook.)
T				☐	Instruction: *Definition of Objects and Structures.* (See Student Workbook.)
	O			☐	Instruction: *Architectural Styles.*
		S	A	☐	Phone calls to reconfirm dates and times of site visits.
		S		☐	Secure plat map (optional.)
	O			☐	Inform news media of *Inventory America* project.
		S	A	☐	Borrow equipment needed for site visit (see workbook for details.)
		S		☐	Measure and complete map draft.
		S		☐	Assess building condition.
		S		☐	Characterize building roof.
		S		☐	Inventory property.
		S		☐	Photograph building.
					4. Conduct additional historical research
		S		☐	Complete building outline map.
T				☐	Instruction: *Local History Research.* [Suggestion: Standard historical sources may not cite your buildings. Encourage your students to research local historical collections, local newspapers, and local property-use records. They should also interview people in tha community who possess information about the buildings.]
T				☐	Instruction: *Definitions of Published, Unpublished, and Pictorial Materials.*
		S		☐	Conduct research, using published, unpublished, and pictorial material.

Responsibility				✔	5. Talk to people
T				☐	Instruction: *Approaching and Interviewing Organizations and Individuals.*
		S		☐	Interview organizations and individuals.
		S	A	☐	Keep track of those who helped in complete inventory.
T				☐	Instruction: *Questions of Significance.* [See Student Workbook.]
					6. Establish historical significance
		S		☐	Answer workbook questions.
		S		☐	Fill in workbook inventory forms.
					7. Complete your *Inventory America* form
		S		☐	Label pictures.
		S		☐	Assemble and attach appendices to form.
		S		☐	Return borrowed equipment.
		S	A	☐	Prepare and mail letters of thanks.
T				☐	Approve completed forms in student workbooks.
		S	A	☐	Make photocopies of forms; sign each copy.
					8. Let others know about your research
	O			☐	Prepare news release.
	O	S		☐	Plan formal donation ceremonies. [Suggestion: An appropriate donation ceremony organization which has pledged to organize, maintain, and supervise the inventories' use can add further dimensions to participants' education.]
		S	A	☐	Distribute copies of forms. [Suggestion: Send copies to your State Historic Preservation Office and other repositories indicated in the supplementary material available from the National Center for the Study of History.]

Selecting and Working with the Appropriate Community Repository

Enlisting and working with the appropriate community repository is important in assuring that today's research will be tomorrow's resource. Student work is generally considered "throw-away" – valuable for the training it has provided, but of no long-term use. Often, historical work done by adult volunteers has been similarly viewed. *Inventory America* should end that kind of thinking.

If a previously-established building inventory project has already chosen a repository, find out if the attention given to collecting and caring for completed forms has been satisfactory.

Attributes to assess include:

- Institutional permanence
- Public confidence
- Commitment to sound record-keeping practice
- Availability to researchers

Should you wish to continue using this repository, inform them in writing about the desire to participate in the larger project. Arrange a meeting to discuss *Inventory America* and determine how your group can best contribute to the inventories that have already been completed.

If there has been no prior program, a new repository will have to be selected. Your choice might be your local public library, historical society, a research institution in your area, or another organization with an established reputation for the collection, care, and use of local historical materials.

In a close decision, decide in favor of the organization which seems most receptive to the goal of inventorying of community historical resources.

You will find that most libraries and other institutions which collect, care for, and make available information about history will be eager to participate. *Inventory America* has been endorsed by all major history education entities. Moreover, libraries are always trying to meet the demand for reliable materials relating to local history. *Inventory America* will be viewed as a valuable addition to these information resources.

Steps to take in approaching a new institution:

- Introduce yourself and your own school or organization
- Explain *Inventory America* and express what you like about it
- Emphasize its benefits to those who will do the research
- Stress the long-term benefits to the community for participating in *Inventory America*
- Highlight the benefits to the research repository itself
- Tell of the kinds of community support the project has already received
- Ask for suggestions concerning appropriate publicity for *Inventory America* activities

Assuring Community Participation

There are many reasons why a teacher or project leader should work with other organizations in the community.

Because *Inventory America* is both an educational program and a way to accomplish needed historical research for the community, the workbook serves as a practical tool for adults and students. A historical society, preservation group, or another community organization may be the dominant sponsor. Whatever group is involved, partnerships should be seen as a valuable educational benefit for schools as well as their organizational partners.

The lists of individuals and organizations in the workbook are intended as a guide to the types of people who probably could give information about buildings being inventoried. It is not all-inclusive. Discuss the kinds of community information that the different people or groups on the list can give with your class. Have students suggest additions.

Help from individuals may take many forms. You will be the best judge of how they should be involved. One logical use of partners would be as aides to accompany the student inventory teams on their site visits. This need not be onerous; all the site information needed for the *Inventory America* form may be collected in one visit.

You do not need to have local partners. However, because this effort is community oriented, partnerships will be easy to forge. Not only can you get significant help, but this participation will have a strong motivational effect on your students. When institutional partnerships are established, it is imperative that you work out in advance who the spokesperson(s) for the joint effort will be.

You may contact or be contacted by reporters from the media to explain *Inventory America* for a wide audience. Descriptive brochures and sample press releases are available from the National Center for the Study of History. In developing your own materials, you may also wish to incorporate positive aspects of the program as listed in "Benefits of an *Inventory America* Program."

Interdisciplinary Modules

Inventory America develops skills in and knowledge of

Architecture	*Historic Preservation*
Art	*History*
Civics	*Mathematics*
Conservation	*Photography*
Economics	*Planning*
Education	*Sociology*
Geography	*Land Use*
Geology	

By participating in *Inventory America*, students increase the range of their knowledge and skills in many areas. As they prepare detailed inventories of noteworthy buildings, activities from any of the subjects listed above may be incorporated to supplement core *Inventory America* activities. Modules focusing on geography, architectural style, drafting and/or drawing provide a few examples. For further discussion of these and other options, contact the National Center for the Study of History.

Benefits of an Inventory America Program

Participation in an *Inventory America* program not only strengthens the curriculum, but also increases student motivation and provides an economical, practical base for further interdisciplinary studies. Other *Inventory America* benefits include:

Students & Other Researchers:

- Teaches history, written & oral expression and problem-solving
- Stimulates learning by focusing on the tangible reminders of local history
- Fosters an appreciation of the contributions of earlier generations
- Provides practical exercise in information collection and organization
- Promotes historic preservation and conservation awareness
- Expands visual understanding and appreciation
- Points out the effects of time and place
- Helps explain change and its causes
- Broadens viewpoints by working with evidence from many sources
- Encourages self-motivation and self-expression while fostering teamwork
- Enlarges pride and commitment to community
- Serves as an introduction to community service

Teachers, Schools and Local School Boards:

- Supplements history courses with practical activities
- Provides unique, inexpensive instructional material
- Engenders positive community involvement and response

Historic Preservation is also fully supported by the program.

In 1966, the Historic Preservation Act was passed by Congress to slow the alarming rate at which our historic buildings were being destroyed. Unfortunately, because of the lack of inventories of significant buildings, we didn't even know which buildings were worthy of being considered for preservation in the future. To this end, the *National Register of Historic Places* was established in 1966, maintained by the National Park Service. While more than 60,000 older buildings of national significance have been inventoried and added to the *National Register*, millions of buildings of local significance have never been studied.

To foster the preservation and continuing use of older buildings, many communities have begun local inventories. Knowledge about such buildings is the key to preserving the best of the past. The inventories themselves not only serve as historical records, they aid the formulation of local planning decisions. *Inventory America* benefits both public and private sector participants in the following ways:

Community Agencies, Planning Commissions & Related Groups:

- Focuses attention on community resources
- Provides information for more effective planning
- Stimulates community involvement
- Promotes renewed respect for the tangible assets of the community
- Encourages partnerships
- Serves in neighborhood revitalization efforts
- Fosters pride in residents and stimulates the interest of visitors

Cultural Associations:

- Helps to preserve elements of the past by adding to research collections
- Rejuvenates public interest in local cultural associations
- Builds a tangible link between the schools and *Inventory America* repositories
- Provides opportunities for positive publicity
- Serves as the basis for community slide or film programs, displays, exhibits, or lectures

Property Owners:

- Promotes renewed respect and understanding for property
- Provides an inventory record for participating property owners

Senior Citizen Groups:

- Includes senior citizens as major participants in *Inventory America* activities
- Extends the community's memory
- Fosters cross-generational connections
- Provides a valuable source for volunteer assistance

Sources of Information

For information on local and state historical societies, see the suggestions appearing in the *Inventory America* workbook under "Going Back in Time."

Consult the materials in your public library's reference section, especially such directories as *Guide to State and Local Historical Societies and Associations*, published by the American Association for State & Local History, 172 Second Avenue North, Nashville, Tennessee 37201.

Call your State Historic Preservation Office for information and guidance. A complete listing of SHPO's names, addresses and telephone numbers is available from the National Conference of State Historic Preservation Officers, as shown below.

Key organizations to contact for further information include:

National Conference of State Historic Preservation Officers
444 North Capitol Street, NW, Suite 342
Washington, DC 20001-1512

National Register of Historic Places
National Park Service
U.S. Department of the Interior
Washington, DC 20240

National Trust for Historic Preservation
1785 Massachusetts Avenue, NW
Washington, DC 20036

Center for Historic Preservation
Box 80, MTSU
Murfreesboro, TN 37132

National Center for the Study of History
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